



Senate

General Assembly

File No. 423

January Session, 2009

Substitute Senate Bill No. 878

Senate, April 2, 2009

The Committee on Human Services reported through SEN. DOYLE of the 9th Dist., Chairperson of the Committee on the part of the Senate, that the substitute bill ought to pass.

AN ACT CONCERNING THE PREVENTION ROLE OF THE DEPARTMENT OF CHILDREN AND FAMILIES.

Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representatives in General Assembly convened:

- 1 Section 1. (NEW) (*Effective from passage*) On or before July 1, 2010,
- 2 the Department of Children and Families shall, within available
- 3 appropriations, establish a differential response pilot program in two
- 4 of the department's regional offices, one in an urban area and one in a
- 5 rural area. For purposes of the pilot program, the department shall
- 6 develop and use an assessment standard to determine which reports of
- 7 abuse and neglect, pursuant to section 17a-101g of the general statutes,
- 8 require a full investigation and which reports may be referred to
- 9 community-based agencies for services. The standard shall take into
- 10 account the nature of the report and the level of risk to the child. On or
- 11 before January 1, 2011, the Commissioner of Children and Families
- 12 shall report, in accordance with section 11-4a of the general statutes, on
- 13 the pilot program to the select committee of the General Assembly
- 14 having cognizance of matters relating to children.

This act shall take effect as follows and shall amend the following sections:

Section 1	<i>from passage</i>	New section
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KID *Joint Favorable Subst. C/R* HS

HS *Joint Favorable Subst.*

The following fiscal impact statement and bill analysis are prepared for the benefit of members of the General Assembly, solely for the purpose of information, summarization, and explanation, and do not represent the intent of the General Assembly or either House thereof for any purpose:

OFA Fiscal Note

State Impact:

Agency Affected	Fund-Effect	FY 10 \$	FY 11 \$
Children & Families, Dept.	GF - See Below	See Below	See Below

Note: GF=General Fund

Municipal Impact: None

Explanation

The bill requires the Department of Children and Families (DCF) to implement a two region differential response pilot program (one urban, one rural) on or before July 1, 2010. The annual cost of conducting the two pilot programs would be expected to be \$1.5 - \$1.8 million, depending upon the regions selected.¹

No funding specific to a differential response pilot program has been included within the Governor's Recommended FY 10-11 Biennial Budget. Should no appropriation be included within the enacted FY 10-11 Biennial Budget, the requirement that the pilot program be developed within available appropriations would likely result in one of four outcomes: (1) DCF will proceed with the program, and will require a deficiency appropriation; (2) DCF will delay the implementation of the program pending the approval of additional appropriations to meet this mandate in future fiscal years; (3) DCF will shift resources from other department priorities, thereby impacting existing departmental programs; or (4) DCF will not implement the pilot program.

If implemented, it is anticipated that the Department would be able to report to the Select Committee on Children by January 1, 2011,

¹ This assumes that the agency would operate the pilot programs within two of the six regional geographic areas currently utilized for other programming.

regarding the progress of the pilot differential response program within its normally budgeted resources.

A future indeterminate savings to the state would result should the pilot program successfully reach its goals of reducing child abuse and neglect in its target neighborhoods. Any resulting savings would be associated with the potential diversion of families from the children's protective services system.

The Out Years

The annualized ongoing fiscal impact identified above would continue into the future subject to inflation.

Sources: Public Hearing Testimony 2/19/08; State of New Jersey Department of Children and Families, press release; Kern County (CA) Network for Children, RFP; Washoe County (NV), RFP; Ohio Department of Jobs and Family Services, RFP; Board of Hennepin County (MN), Commissioner's Communications; Wikipedia (population figures); "Strengthening and Supporting Families Through A Differential Response Model – Request for Information," CT Department of Children and Families.

OLR Bill Analysis**sSB 878*****AN ACT CONCERNING THE PREVENTION ROLE OF THE
DEPARTMENT OF CHILDREN AND FAMILIES.*****SUMMARY:**

By July 1, 2010, this bill requires the Department of Children and Families (DCF) to establish a differential response pilot program in two of its regional offices. One must be in an urban area and the other in a rural area. The pilot must operate within existing appropriations.

The bill requires the DCF commissioner to report to the Children's Committee on the pilot program. She must do this by January 1, 2011.

EFFECTIVE DATE: Upon passage

DIFFERENTIAL RESPONSES

The use of differential responses allows agencies to provide services to some families without a formal determination of abuse or neglect. The bill requires DCF to develop and use an assessment standard to determine which reports of abuse and neglect require a full investigation and which may be referred to community-based agencies for services. The standard must take into account the nature of the report and the level of risk to the child.

COMMITTEE ACTION

Select Committee on Children

Joint Favorable Substitute Change of Reference
Yea 9 Nay 2 (03/03/2009)

Human Services Committee

Joint Favorable Substitute

Yea 19 Nay 0 (03/19/2009)